

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PARISH OF CALNE & BLACKLAND



WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM

Matthew 2:1-12



*...keeping you in
touch with your church family.*

Happy Christmas & New Year

December 2020/January 2021



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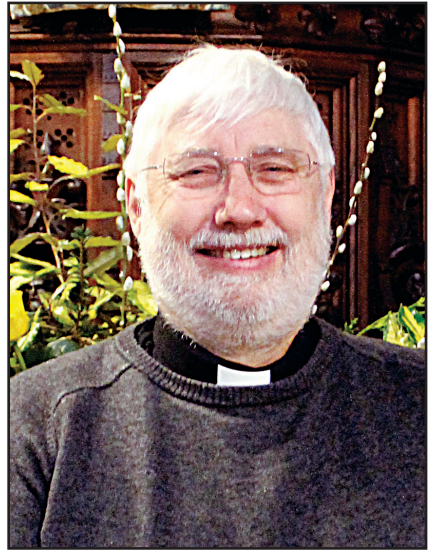
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Church House is closed during the corona virus crisis.

A Prayer for December and January

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things
I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.*

Amen

Church addresses

Holy Trinity Church, Quemerford, Calne, London Rd, Wiltshire, SN11 0AR

St. Mary's Church, Church Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0HU

St. Peter's Church, Blackland, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 8UQ

Website: www.parishofcalneandblackland.org.uk

Find us on facebook @stmaryschurchcalne

*Look out in both these places for information about online
worship and services during the corona virus lockdown.*



Virtually in the flesh!

A thought for December



It's fascinating how we continually develop new vocabulary to navigate our way through a changing world. A year ago many of the words that we now use every day would have been unknown to us. Words like coronavirus or covid would have meant nothing, even the word pandemic would not have figured in our day to day conversation. But 9 months after the first covid-19 cases began to appear in the UK we have developed a whole vocabulary of what has been termed 'coronaspeak'! So phrases like 'social distance', 'self-isolate' and 'lock-down' (the latter previously mainly associated with the prison system or the TV quiz show 'Pointless'!) have become commonplace. For example, a 'covidiot' is a person behaving irresponsibly during the pandemic or 'coronabreak', a period of confinement having had a positive covid-19 test. There is even new covid rhyming-slang like 'Miley Cyrus' for coronavirus (Miley Cyrus is an American singer-song-writer). People also seem to be creating their own new vocabulary. I was in Sainsburys recently when someone complained about another person 'nozzling'. I wasn't sure what they meant until she explained that she was referring to someone who wasn't wearing their face mask properly i.e. it wasn't covering their nose!

The language we use is both shaped by and shaped for the experiences that we have and the experiences that we share - our culture (for good and ill). Over time the language becomes so embedded in our everyday lives that we stop noticing it. Christianity has left us such a legacy. Take



the word Christmas. It's a word with a strong presence in our language and culture. Of course its meaning has drifted from its origins in many ways. When we use the word 'Christmassy' all kinds of images spring to mind... from decorated pine trees to the smell of mulled wine. The word Christmas combines two words: the Greek word Christ (a translation of the Hebrew word Messiah, meaning 'God's anointed one') and the Latin word mas(s) which refers to the Eucharist (from the dismissal prayer at the end of Communion).

Christmas is perhaps a bit obvious. But what about the word person? This too has Greek origins coming from the word persona which referred to the mask that actors wore on stage to portray a particular character. It became very important in the early church when looking for language to describe the indescribable: The one God who is Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It's from this sense of the co-equal persons of the Trinity that we derive our modern notion of all people being created equal. The American Constitution begins: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. Leaving aside the outdated language, it's not self-evident at all! The fact that in this pandemic we are seemingly caught in a dilemma between saving lives and preserving livelihoods, is because we understand that each human life is precious, each person uniquely reflecting the image of the triune God. In the Greco-Roman world of Jesus' time this was an alien thought.

John's gospel begins "In the beginning

was the Word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God". A few verses later we read "and the Word became flesh and lived among us". Christmas is the Feast of Incarnation of 'God becoming flesh', coming to us in the person of Jesus, love that's made visible. As I write we don't know what government rules will be guiding our activity but Christmas is bound to be different and more 'virtual' than usual.

It will need to be so in order that we can protect not only ourselves but perhaps more importantly other people, and those that have our care. Strange as it may seem this is how we will need to show our love this Christmas. There will be much that

we will miss from our celebrations but we need to find different ways to demonstrate our love. It will be harder than usual but when I think about how people have responded to the Calne Foodbank and other community support in the town then I know that we can and we will do this. However we will be able to celebrate Christmas in 2020, the most important thing is to celebrate the birth of the Christ-child, love come among us, love in person, and a love that we need to share.

Wishing you all God's blessings for a loving and joyous Christmas and New Year,

Revd Bob Kenway



Dates For December and January

Advent Sunday: 29th November

Christmas Day: 25th December

St Stephen's Day: 26th December

Watch Night: (New Year's Eve)

Epiphany: 6th January

Baptism of Christ: 10th January.

Christmas Celebrations

At the time of writing we do not know what will be possible. Keep your eyes on the website, the facebook page and the parish notices.

Will you join our Bible Book Club?

In advent we are launching a Bible Book Club supported by Bible Society material. Each month we will read one book of the Bible and we will use reflections and questions from the Bible Society to help us think about familiar passages in new ways. We will include these resources in the monthly newsletter.

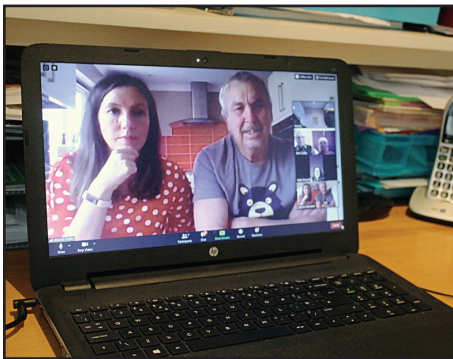
For December/January we are starting with Mark's Gospel as this is the Gospel for the new church year which starts in advent. This is a great opportunity to grow in faith together as a community over the winter months.

From Bob, Teresa and the Prayer & Discipleship Group.

Additional resources are available at:
<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/bible-book-club/mark/>
or please contact Liz Roberts (07876 196505 or e.ares@btopenworld.com) for printed resources

or help finding someone to partner with.

Also, Steven & Jenny are running a 'Zoom' Bible study on Mark starting Thursday 26th November at 7.30pm: please contact them on stevenjenny.colby@gmail.com if you would like to join - all are welcome!



Getting Outside in Advent

In the first lockdown, many people engaged with the natural world in ways they hadn't before, and many are talking about how to carry this on during a more wintry lockdown too. Wareham Schools worker and Pioneer Priest Hilary Bond has put something together in a small leaflet, to help us get out in the natural world in all weathers during Advent, to connect with something - or Someone - outside ourselves. See how to download it on Grapevine.

'Perhaps this advent, as we look forward to

a Christmas that may look very different from last year, it could be an opportunity to connect through nature with something outside ourselves that I as a Christian would call God. But whether you see it the same way as me or not, being in touch with creation throughout the seasons can be a truly life-giving thing - go on - get out there and give it a go. And do feel free to send me any pictures or let me know how it's going - I'd love to hear from you!' Email: hilary.bond@me.com





**What if there had been three wise women instead of three wise men?
They would have asked directions, arrived on time,
helped to deliver the baby, brought practical gifts,
cleaned the stable, made a casserole and:
*There would be Peace on Earth!***



Each year the Parish commits to giving to good causes outside of our immediate area. At Christmas we usually support Christian Aid, and this year it will be especially important to do this online as our attendances at services over Christmas will be limited. There is a link to do this on the Parish website or via www.christianaid.org.uk Christian Aid is committed to help families around the world to overcome poverty and injustice, wherever the need is greatest.

**We wish all our readers peace and blessings at Christmas and
a Happy New Year.
Do let us have any news for our next edition in February
(deadline 10th January 2021)**



Editorial Team:-

Sue Twyman, Jane Ridgwell and Jack Robinson.

Illustration, Graphic Design and Layout:- Alex Grenfell.



And finally...

If you organise any groups or events in the parish and would like them to be included in this newsletter then get in touch with the editors.

We would also love to have articles about the different groups in the parish to spread the word more widely and encourage people to come along.

Please Email or give copies of items to us in plenty of time for the next newsletter, the deadline is 10th of the preceding month.

email: cbp.news.editor@gmail.com